

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Department of Health and Family Services
Division of Disability and Elder Services

DDES Info Memo Series 2006-14

Date: July 24, 2006

Index Title: Assuring Wisconsin Functional Screen
Quality and Requesting Feedback

To: Listserv

For: Aging and Disability Resource Center Directors
Alcohol and Other Drug Program Directors
Area Administrators / Human Services Area Coordinators
County Departments of Community Programs Directors
County Departments of Developmental Disabilities Services Directors
County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
County Child Welfare Program Directors
County Developmental Disability Coordinators
County Family Support Coordinators
County Mental Health Coordinators
County Substance Abuse Coordinators
County Long-Term Support Coordinators
Family Care Care Management Organization Directors
Wisconsin Partnership Program Directors

From: Sinikka Santala *Sinikka Santala/pp*
Administrator

Subject: Assuring Wisconsin Functional Screen Quality and Requesting Feedback

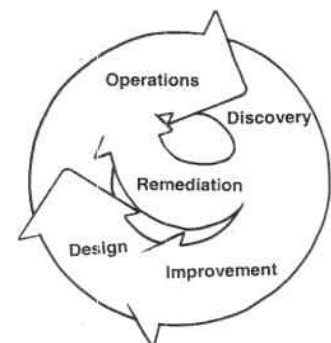
BACKGROUND

The Division of Disability and Elder Services (DDES) has the long-term goal of ensuring quality and statewide consistency in determining an individual's eligibility for Wisconsin's long-term care programs. The Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) has developed several web-based functional eligibility screening tools for various target groups.

DHFS has utilized Screen Lead Workgroups as the process for involving local agencies in ensuring screen quality. However, due to the expansion to multiple screening tools and target groups, as well as the expansion of the number of screeners, the DHFS needs a more comprehensive and coordinated process for assuring screen quality.

DHFS will be developing and implementing a new Functional Screen (FS) Quality Assurance Framework beginning in 2007. The purpose of this information memo is to provide general background information on the aspects of this framework that are most relevant to local agencies in order to solicit your comments and feedback on this plan.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Quality Framework: Design, Operations, Discovery, Remediation and Improvement, was used as the basis for a comprehensive plan to assure quality for all Functional Screen types in the State of Wisconsin. These screen types include the Adult Long-Term Care Functional Screen (LTC FS), Children's Long-Term Support Functional Screen (CLTS FS) and the Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Functional Screen (MH/AODA FS).



A robust system of quality policies, procedures, and processes are needed to ensure FS quality. This system also needs multiple levels of responsibility and improvement strategies from local screening entities and county departments, to the state-level, to ensure adequate FS quality and oversight. A group of DHFS staff, representing each screen type, joined forces to develop a coordinated statewide screen quality plan, and DDES is proposing this framework for your consideration and comment.

The new FS Quality Assurance Framework has many elements of the existing system such as:

- State-level quality oversight;
- The use of the Functional Screen listservs to notify users about changes to the screen, clinical instructions or other screen information;
- New screener training; and
- Local screener input related to improvements.

The FS Quality Assurance Framework also includes new elements reflective of the FS evolution over the past several years. These changes include:

- **Screen Consultation Groups:** Screen Consultation Groups will be established for each type of screen: LTC FS, CLTS FS and MH/AODA FS. Each group will have geographic and diverse types of users represented. For example, the LTC FS Consultation Group will include screeners from Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Family Care, Home and Community-Based Services Waivers, and Wisconsin Partnership Program agencies. These groups will be established through a volunteer process. **FS User Manual:** Another planned improvement is to develop a web-based FS User Manual that will consolidate information for issues common to all screen types, with references to unique materials or resources as needed for the various screens. As the DHFS develops this manual, we will undertake a survey process to solicit input into the manual. We will also survey screeners and agencies related to the need for improvements in the screen, instructions, training, and electronic mailings, as well as clinical and technical help supports.
- **Local Quality Assurance Procedures:** Local quality assurance procedures make an important contribution to the Functional Screen Quality Assurance Framework. Annually, counties and local entities will need to submit a Local Functional Screen Quality Plan. The DHFS will establish the format and content of this plan with the intent of facilitating local development of required elements, as well as the assurance that the plan requirements are consistent across each screen type. Counties and local entities that administer more than one screen type will be able to submit a combined plan.
- **State-Level Changes:** Functional Screen duties at the DHFS will be centralized. Two staff members will be charged with primary responsibility for quality, data management and coordination of the Functional Screen. One role for these staff will be to assure consistent approaches whenever possible among the multiple screen types. These staff will also assure that data are evaluated to determine needed improvements or trends in functional screens with the purpose of maintaining the highest possible quality and accuracy of all eligibility decisions. The two staff members will work with existing staff as needed to carry out these functions.

DHFS, in partnership with the Consultation Groups, plans to design an ongoing process to assure that each certified screener demonstrates the needed skills and knowledge to achieve an accurate screen result. This will include an evaluation of the LTC FS Inter-Rater Reliability Testing (IRRT) process. Other options and procedures, such as annual testing, or required refresher training and testing to demonstrate this outcome will also be evaluated. The on-line learning modules and testing of new screeners will also be assessed through this process. Finally, the need for web-based training for specific and related skills such as interviewing skills, privacy requirements, and risk assessment will be evaluated.

DHFS is inviting written input and feedback related to the proposals outlined in this memo. This will assure success as we move forward with a comprehensive quality assurance framework for the Functional Screen. This is a preliminary opportunity for comment. As each element of the FS Quality Assurance Framework is developed and implemented, further input from the Consultation Groups, and broader input will be solicited as needed.

A feedback form is attached to this document. This form is also available electronically on the DHFS web site if you prefer to complete and submit this form electronically. Comments are due to Hollister Chase, contact information as noted below, by August 31, 2006.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the people of Wisconsin and your partnership in determining people's eligibility for various, critical support and service programs. A comprehensive framework for FS quality will assure that people can continue to expect the same high quality and consistency of support.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT:

Human Service Area Coordinators

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT:

Hollister Chase
DDES, Bureau of Long-Term Support
1 West Wilson Street, Room 518
PO Box 7851
Madison, WI 53707-7851
Tel: 608/261-8877
Fax: 608 266-5629
Email: chasehl@dhfs.state.wi.us

MEMO WEB SITE: http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/dsl_info/

Attachment – [Feedback Form](#)